


Administrative Judge

Memo

To: All Staff

From: Kristin W. Sweeney, Administrative Judge 

Cc: Administrative Judge Kristin W. Sweeney, Judge Patrick F. Corrigan, Alison L. Floyd, Judge Thomas F. O'Malley, Judge Michael J. Ryan, Judge Jennifer L. O'Malley

Date: July 24, 2019

Re: Detention Superintendent

Friends and colleagues,

I am writing to let you know that Mr. Shewalter started work Monday and resigned approximately five hours after he started saying that he realized his heart just wasn't in it. While we were very surprised, we wish him well. We are all better off if our staff know themselves and their own capacities. If a job is not a good fit, it is better for all concerned the sooner that knowledge and/or feeling is acknowledged and acted upon.

We are in a period of great change both in detention and in the court. It has been fascinating to see that even some people both in and out of the court clamor for change, others are fearful or skeptical. Sometimes, I find it helpful to remind myself that of the many people who spend their lives working for the betterment of others, pursuing what they know to be true even in the face of opposition, or who persist even in the face of multiple rejections.

The blockbuster book Chicken Soup for the Soul was rejected **144** times before finally being published. Stephen King's first novel, Carrie, was rejected by 30 different publishers.

In 2005, Barry Marshall and J. Robin Warren were awarded the Nobel Prize for their discovery that bacteria are responsible for stomach ulcers. Twenty years before that, their idea was ridiculed by the scientific establishment who maintained that bacteria couldn't live in the acidic environment of the stomach, and that it was just stress or bad diet that was to blame. Marshall prevailed when he swallowed a petri-dish of dangerous bacteria to prove his theory. Said Marshall, "everyone was against me, but I knew I was right." (*H. Pylori and the Making of a Myth*. 23 May 1998, Academy of Achievement website)

The artist Vincent Van Gogh sold one painting in his lifetime for 400 francs (\$1000 adjusting for inflation) and died in poverty at age 37. Since his death, his paintings have been sold for (adjusted for inflation) \$700 million dollars.

All of these people persisted. We will persist in working together to make things better for the kids and families we serve, and for each other. We are all in this together. The actions of one affect everyone else. Working at the juvenile court/ detention center is meaningful but it's also hard, and it's not for everyone. Some people decide that working at juvenile court is not for them, and that's okay. I started at this court in 1998, and while it has sometimes been extremely challenging, I can't imagine working anywhere else. I am grateful to be working with so very many people who are working so very hard to make things better for our kids and our community.

Thank you for your service.

Kristin Sweeney